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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to present a general overview of the linguistic setting of Arabic. Three main areas are covered. The first of these, diglossia, is defined in general terms and then examined more closely in relation to its historical development in Arabic-speaking countries (i.e., as resulting from geographic, socioeconomic, and religious splittings in this area of the world). The second major portion of this paper is devoted to a synchronic comparison of the phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon of Classical Arabic and Syrian Arabic. The comparison shows that: (1) the phonology of the two varieties of Arabic is "moderately different;" (2) the vernacular has a simpler grammatical structure than the Classical, and is becoming increasingly synthetic; and (3) lexically, the vernacular borrows much from Classical Arabic. The final portion of the paper discusses the need for and development of a standardized language that would dissolve the diglossic split in Arabic. The most practical and likely choice for a unified language is here offered as that dialect known as the "language of the educated." This Intercommon Spoken Arabic, alreading evolving, perhaps will lead to sociolinguistic changes what will distribute literacy more widely in the Arab world. (Author/TL)

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Diglossia in Arabic Speech Communities: The Classical Language Compared with the Syrian Vernacular

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Amal Farris
January 27, 1975

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Research Project - EN 592
Dr. James W. Ney, Advisor

Preface

I would like to express my gratitude to my uncle, Dr. Deeb Shalhoub, for pronouncing on tape the utterances in the syntax section in Classical Arabic and in his own Damascus dialect. I have a special regard for his manner of articulation. I would also like to thank my cousin, Michael Chahin, another Damascus informant, for his contributions to various Damascus Arabic usages in this text. Any mistakes in transcription are the fault of this writer and not of any informant; for all of the Syrian Arabic utterances are transcribed on the basis of oral-aural comprehension.

Appreciation also inevitably goes to my advisor, Dr. Ney, who directed me to vital resources, and to my immediate family for their patience and tolerance.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to present a general overview of the linguistic setting of Arabic. The main areas covered--diglossia, language description and comparison, and standardization--are merely introductions themselves to the status of Arabic. And, although all three of the areas are quite nearly inseparable, each one would benefit greatly from an in-depth, comprehensive study. This writer has found it most pleasurable, however, delving into those existing sources, though few they are, dealing with these three areas and, for the first time, relating and exposing them, even if only in a superficial way. She anticipates carrying out a great deal of investigation in the seemingly complex and extremely fascinating Arabic language field in the future.

Symbols and Abbreviations

/ /	encloses phonemic transcription
' '	encloses glosses or translations
. (subscript dot)	indicates emphatic velarized sounds, with the exception of /ḥ/, which is not a velarized consonant; its dot is merely to distinguish it from /h/
double phonemes (/ii/ or /bb/)	indicate long vowel or consonant
——	indicates liaison between words
•	indicates division of a linguistic form at the end of a line
~	'alternates with'
C	a consonant
C_1, C_2. . .	identifies position of C in a root or word
V	a vowel
CA	Classical Arabic
SA	Syrian Arabic
ISA	Intercommon Spoken Arabic

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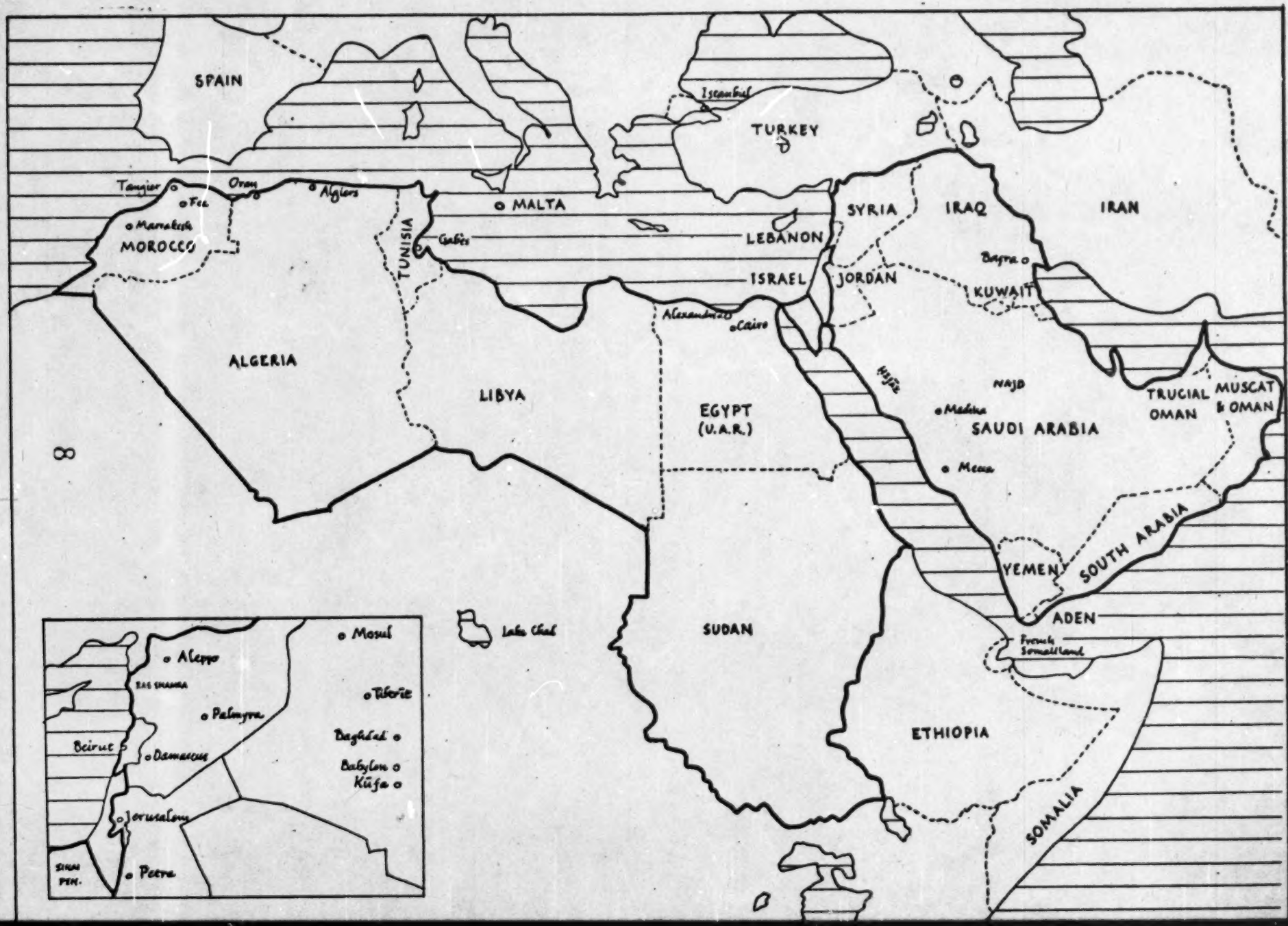
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1. General Background to the Arabic Language

Arabic is the official language of more than a dozen states, including Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, the United Arab Republic, Sudan, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Yemen, Aden, and the states of the Arabian peninsula (see map). It belongs to the Semitic group of languages, which include Akkadian, Ugaritic, Hebrew, Phoenician, Aramaic, Syriac, Ethiopic, South Arabic, and many Arabic dialects. Of these, Arabic is the most important Semitic language, with over eighty million speakers. Arabic itself can be divided into Southern and Northern dialects: the earliest inscriptions available may be traced back to Southern dialects of the eight century B.C., while Northern Arabic did not appear until much later. It was not until the sixth century A.D. that a poetic koine appeared, which developed into the language of the Qur'ān, Islam's sacred book, in the following century. The Arabic of the Qur'ān and of literature may be traced to the city of Mecca and its surroundings in the northwestern region of the Arabian Peninsula. (Beeston 1970: 11-15; Chejne 1969:25)

The term "Arabic" refers to a number of speech-forms which are sufficiently homogeneous to be considered dialectal varieties of a single language, although substantial differences exist among them. One of these forms is the Classical Arabic of medieval times. It was the language of pre-Islamic poetry, the Qur'ān, and the literature, and is the primary written form today. Classical Arabic was also the language of administration and science and coexisted with many Arabic and non-Arabic dialects; for it accompanied Islam throughout North and East Africa and into Central and Southeast Asia as a liturgical language,

and it preserved Greek science through the Middle Ages. The Muslim conquests in the 8th century stirred in scholars a fear that a very rapid evolution of the language might lead to a loss of ability to understand the Qur'ān and the prophetic tradition, thereby producing a situation which parallels the evolution of the Romance languages from the now defunct Latin. Hence, Arabic grammar and lexicography were born in that century to establish a standard of "correct" Arabic. This very same grammar is taught in the schools of the Arab world today and yet remains the ideal aimed at by the educated classes for literary expression. (Chejne 1969:34; Bateson 1967:ix; Beeston 1970:14)

The second type of Arabic is the modern literary or standard Arabic used throughout the whole Arabic-speaking world from Morocco in the west to Iran in the east. It is based on the Classical Arabic of medieval times and has similar morphology, grammar, and syntax, but has included new vocabulary. It is also like Classical Arabic in that it is the language of the educated class and of a vast and varied literature, and it is the common standard language thriving beside a large number of dialects. (Chejne 1969:34)

The third type of Arabic consists of localized varieties, termed "Arabic dialects", which are used in the speech of everyday life. Each of these dialects contains features which are unique to it as well as features which are characteristic of a large geographical area within the Arab world. (Chejne 1969:34) Since colloquial Arabic is almost entirely a spoken form of the language, and since the Arab grammarians were only interested in the dialects for purposes of clarifying odd constructions in Classical Arabic

or for identifying errors to be eradicated from literary usage, the origins of the dialects of colloquial Arabic presently in use are not clear. One hypothesis that has been suggested is that the modern dialects "are descendants of some form of intertribal speech in use during the period of the conquests, containing a greater or lesser admixture of Classical Arabic, and owe their variation to the indigenous influences." (Bateson 1967:94, 95)

Whether or not a hypothetical Arabic koine is the common origin of the modern dialects does not alter the fact that for centuries now a linguistic dichotomy has existed in the Arab world. This phenomenon is illustrated by the duality of the "'two levels of life' - the real self and the ideal self":

> The expected gap between the real self of the Arab and his ideal self becomes even larger when strengthened by the superimposition of the gap between literary Arabic, which reigns supreme in the ideal self, and colloquial Arabic, which is the monopoly of the practical functions of the real self. When the Arab thinks of his ideal self he thinks in terms of what he has learned from reading and listening, that is, in terms of literary Arabic. But in his everyday living, he is free to distinguish between his ideal self and what he really thinks and does, thanks to his use of the colloquial Arabic. (Chejne 1969:162)

Due, in part, to deep historical traditions, the two virtually separate languages have been perpetuated, thereby reinforcing the "psychological balance". Not only have there arisen complications in the Arabs' thought, but an enduring division between two social groups--the literate and illiterate--has resulted from linguistic dualism. However, in spite of the apparent social stratification produced by them, the two language types have coexisted peacefully throughout the ages. The average Arab does not appear to be disturbed at all by this linguistic dualism; for no threats of a linguistic revolt have yet been voiced. It must be emphasized that only from the intelligentsia has protest come forth about whether the one or the other of the two languages should prevail. (Chejne 1969:162, 163)

II. Diglossia Situation

In recent years, study of the development and characteristics of standardized languages has regained attention. Charles A. Ferguson (1959:325) examines"...one particular kind of standardization where two varieties of a language exist side by side throughout the community, with each having a definite role to play," which pertains to the Arabic-speaking countries. The term "diglossia," introduced by Charles A. Ferguson in this same study, applies to this situation. Ferguson further defines the term in the following manner:

> DIGLOSSIA is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation. (1959:336)

Diglossia is most likely a very widespread phenomenon in speech communities. Several countries and languages, other than those in the Arab world, which clearly belong in this category are Greece, Switzerland, and Haiti. (Fellman 1973:25; Ferguson 1959: 326) Of these four, however, Arabic diglossia is as old as the language itself, and its classical language has remained relatively stable; the development of the other three diglossia situations is relatively more recent and fairly well known. (Ferguson 1959:327) The Arab situation is also unique in that its diglossic split is linked with at least three other cleavages: geographical splittings, socio-economic splittings, and religious splittings. All of these cleavages have been mutually reinforcing since the beginnings of

recorded time and cannot be easily separated from the history of this area of the world. (Fellman 1973:25)

Before describing in detail the above socio-cultural setting of diglossia in the Arab world, the characteristics of diglossia in general will be discussed (with some reference to Arabic). Ferguson (1959:328-336) identifies nine features of diglossia, all of which have been expanded upon, refined, and significantly contributed to by sociologists greatly concerned with bilingual societies (Fishman, 1967 and Gumperz, 1962). In describing the salient features of diglossia as represented by Arabic, Modern Greek, Swiss German, and Haitian Creole, Ferguson speaks of the H ("high") variety of each as the superposed variety and of the L ("low") varieties as the regional dialects. His characteristics include:

(1) Function. The specialization of function for H and L is one of the most important features of diglossia. Only H is appropriate in one set of situations, while only L is appropriate in another, with only slight overlapping of the two sets. As an illustration, the following sample listing of situations indicates normal use:

	H	L
Sermon in church or mosque	X	
Instructions to servants, waiters, workmen, clerks		X
Personal letter	X	
Speech in parliament, political speech	X	
University lecture	X	
Conversation with family, friends, colleagues		X
News broadcast	X	

	H	L	
Radio "soap opera"		X	
Newspaper editorial, news story, caption on picture	X		
Caption on political cartoon		X	
Poetry	X	X	with certain qualifications
Folk Literature		X	with certain qualifications

(2) Prestige. H is regarded superior to L by all speakers in a diglossia situation. They usually also believe that H is more beautiful, more logical, and more capable of expressing important thoughts than L. In some cases, the superiority of H is related to religion. In Arabic, H, the language of the Qur'ān, is regarded as constituting the actual words of God and of having existed during the creation of the world itself.

(3) Literary heritage. There is always a sizable body of written literature in H which is highly esteemed by the speech community. This body of literature may have been produced much earlier in the past history of the community or may be in production in another speech community where H serves as the standard variety of the language. In Arabic, where the body of literature represents a long time span, contemporary writers--and readers--regard and appreciate the use of archaic words, phrases, or constructions as legitimate, even though the average educated reader will not understand such usage without research on his part.

(4) Acquisition. L is invariably learned by children from their parents and from other children-- "in what may be regarded as the 'normal' way of learning one's mother tongue" (p. 331); H, however, is learned chiefly through formal education. This naturally implies that the grammatical structure of L is learned

intuitively, while that of H is learned in terms of rules and norms to be imitated.

(5) Standardization. Traditionally, there have always been exhaustive descriptive and normative studies of the H form for its grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, style, and orthography; by contrast, such studies of the L form either do not exist, are relatively recent and slight in quantity or, ofter, are written in other languages by foreign scholars carrying out such work. In the Arabic speech community, there is no standard L because there is no single most important center of communication. Thus, only regional standards exist in various areas. (The Arabic of Damascus, for example, serves as a standard L for Syria, and educated individuals from other parts of Syria must learn H and, for conversational purposes, an approximation to Damascus L.)

(6) Stability. Diglossia is not an unstable language situation, but can persist well over a thousand years. When communicative tensions arise in a diglossia situation, they "...may be resolved by the use of relatively uncodified, unstable, intermediate forms of the language....In Arabic, for example, a kind of spoken Arabic much used in certain semiformal or cross-dialectal situations has a highly classical vocabulary with few or no inflectional endings, with certain features of classical syntax, but with a fundamentally colloquial base in morphology and syntax, and a generous admixture of colloquial vocabulary." (p. 332) Lexical items borrowed from H to L comprise a valid analogy to the learned borrowings from Latin to the Romance Languages.

(7) Grammar. The grammatical structures of H and L always display extensive differences. H typically has grammatical categories lacking in L and has an inflectional system of nouns and verbs

which is far less or nonexistent in L. Classical Arabic, for example, has three cases in the noun, while the colloquial dialects have none. Also, there are striking differences of word order and differences in the use of introductory and connective particles between H and L languages. It is generally safe to say, at least for Arabic, that the grammatical structure of any given L variety is simpler than that of its H.

(8) Lexicon. A very great part of the vocabulary of H and L is shared, with, naturally, varied forms and different uses and meanings of these forms in each language. It is quite expected, though, that technical terms and learned expressions in the H lexicon would have no regular L equivalents; and that popular expressions and the names of domestic or localized objects in the L varieties would have no regular H equivalents. "But a striking feature of diglossia is the existence of many paired items, one H one L, referring to fairly common concepts frequently used in both H and L, where the range of meaning of the two items is roughly the same, and the use of one or the other immediately stamps the utterance or written sequence as H or L." (p. 334) In Arabic, the word for "see" is raʔaa in H, and šaaf in L. Raʔaa is never used in ordinary conversation, but is always the form which occurs in written Arabic--even when an original quote contains šaaf, it must be printed as raʔaa, in a newspaper, for example.

(9) Phonology. H and L phonologies are moderately different in Arabic. Although their relationships in other diglossia situations cannot be easily generalized, Ferguson offers two statements which may be justified: first, "the sound systems of H and L

constitute a single phonological structure of which the L phonology is the basic system and the divergent features of H phonology are either a subsystem or a parasystem," (p. 335) and second, "if 'pure' H items have phonemes not found in 'pure' L items, L phonemes frequently substitute for these in oral use of H and regularly replace them in tatsamas." (p. 336)

With the characteristic features of diglossia completed, it is now feasible to describe this particular situation in Arabic speech communities more fully. The colloquial dialects were primarily tribal during the pre-Islamic period, but expanded to regional status thereafter, and now are tending to be national. Classical Arabic, on the other hand, has always been used only in specially designated contexts, and has been attainable only by a portion of the population, that which gained prestige and cultural prominence, because this "second" language required special training. Even today, this diglossia situation continues in the Arab world. (Bateson 1967:79)

The most crucial problems that diglossia has affected are the problems of illiteracy and comprehension difficulty on the part of the peasant in the Arab world today. (Indeed, "the crucial social problem in the Arab world today is the development of the peasant. Fellman 1973:24) The educated urban, or town dweller, even, has made great progress in conquering the problem of linguistic dualism through his acquisition of the standard formal language of Classical Arabic, but the peasant has remained, in this area as in many others, backward and confined to a narrow world (his village) and, with this, to a narrow language (a single dialect). Because of the diglossic

situation, the peasant is isolated from the rest of his nation; for he cannot understand the village radio or read the modern newspapers since both of these use the standard national language, and not any village dialect. Today, however, the peasant is considered by law a citizen of his country who must be allowed to develop himself as a fully productive countryman. The Arab countries are all engaged, to varying degrees, in this process of development, part of which involves teaching the peasant to speak, read, and write the standard language of his nation. (Fellman 1973:24, 28, 29) Efforts in this direction, involving considerations of a single standardized language throughout the Arab world, will be discussed in Part IV of this paper. Presently, however, the socio-cultural origins and development of the diglossic split will be discussed.

The diglossic split in the Arab world is intimately linked with three other cleavages (introduced above), all of which reach back to the beginnings of the history of this area and have, indeed, become deeply entrenched in it. The first of these cleavages consists of geographical splittings. Fellman (1973:25-26) staunchly refutes Arab nationalism's claims of unity and argues "that there never was an appreciable span of time in which the Arabs were all united in an Arab Middle East." Beginning with the struggles between the Egyptian and the Mesopotamian Empires of 2500 B.C. and earlier and continuing through the centuries to Napoleanic and European pursuits in 1860 and following, the area has been continually split by struggles for domination. These geographical splittings finally culminated in the present political fragmentation of the Middle East into its states, kingdoms,

republics, and monarchies. One might want to argue that there have been at least two times in the Arabs' past when they were a united and distinctive people: with the rise of Islam in 630 A.D. and with the domination of the Ottoman Empire in the late fourteenth to the early nineteenth centuries. However, all of the Arabs were truly united only for a brief period under Muhammad--for "not even during the Century of the Great Conquests, 650 to 750 A.D., were all of the Arabs truly united" (p. 25); and, as for their unity under Ottoman domination, "unity under a foreign power is only unity under protest." (p. 26)

The second cleavage linked to diglossia in the Arab world consists of socio-economic splittings. (Fellman 1973:26-27) It is to be noted, in considering the area's ancient history, that both the Neolithic and the Urban Revolutions took place first in the Middle East. The separation and division of urbanites and countrymen, consumers and producers developed out of the rise of city states and the beginnings of civilization proper. These splits continue to this day, resulting in three distinct types of citizens--the urbanite, the villager, and the nomad. Among the urbanites, further divisions prevail "between a hereditary aristocracy of priests and kings, a bourgeoisie of scribes, officials, and merchants, and an urban proletariat of artisans and craftsmen." (p. 26) The forbears of, as well as the present-day nomad (and Bedouin), herding sheep, goats, water buffalo, and depending on camels for existence, have always managed to survive independently of civilization proper. All three of the groups, urbanites, villagers, and nomads, as a matter of fact, have had contact with each other throughout history, but have never influenced each other. They have lead

their own lives separately, "each with their own system of law, their own way of working, their own preferences in family living, and, what is most germane to this paper, even their own peculiar oddities of speech. Different strata's different interests lead almost inevitably to different varieties of speaking." (pp. 26-27)

Finally, religious splittings constitute the third cleavage linked to diglossia. (Fellman 1973:27) The Middle East has been the birthplace for three of the world's great religions, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, "but, more importantly, [it] has seen the rise and fall of more religious sects, offshoots and heresies than any other region in the world, if only because of its great antiquity." (p. 27) Political and social questions related to the geographical and socio-economic splittings, treated above, implicitly fostered these offshoots, even though religious questions were the ostensible cause. Thus, the socio-political environment as well as the physical environment of the area, with its "vast deserts, inaccessible mountains with mountain springs, restricted water supplies causing small clusterings of people, all aided in providing refuge areas for dissenting minority groups." (p. 27) The Middle Easterners, then as today, continue to be greatly conscious of religion and to classify people accordingly; in order to prevent conflict, the religious groups and sects do not really intermingle. "This practice leads to inbreeding and a distinctive way of life in eating and clothing habits, family life, and general world outlook." (p. 27) The various religious groups are also characterized by distinctive linguistic habits and peculiarities of speech, all of which contribute to distinctive culture and the diglossia issue among the Arabs.

Thus, culturally, there exist geographical, socio-economic,

and religious splittings in Middle Eastern Arab society which accentuate and lead to the diglossic problem of Arab. These splittings interweave with one another to produce, instead of a totally homogeneous region, only isolated areas of homogeneous behavior. Every one of these areas uses a different colloquial speech, and, within each area, each speaker may choose from any number of different styles. Thus, many dialects of Arabic are in use throughout the Middle East, and each one differs from the standard Classical Arabic-- "giving the fourth splitting, Ferguson's diglossia." (Fellman 1973:27)

It may appear, from the preceding account, that the Middle East is not a valid cultural area at all. However, Fellman (1973:28) notes that Raphael Patai (1962) considers "the common history of Islamic civilization, with its two leading themes of the religion Islam and the language Classical Arabic," as providing the basic unity of this region. Fellman argues, though, that although these two themes, as superposed standards, sufficiently serve to unify Middle Eastern society, they also may, paradoxically, stimulate a diglossia situation; for the Arabs devoutly hold that the two are congruous in that the language incorporates and expresses their most divine, truthful, and beautiful religion. (Fellman 1973:28) Classical Arabic yet remains "the language in which all important things are said [for it is thought to be "more beautiful and more significant"], in addressing God, in crossing national boundaries, and in science and the arts" (Bateson 1967:80); it is, in fact, "God's gift to man, as written by Him in His Book, the Koran,... through His messenger Muhammad.... But, just like God, Classical Arabic is unattainable, or else attainable only through toil in His name. Thus, only holy men,

scholars and teachers can ever hope to know Classical Arabic." (Fellman 1973:28)

Throughout his past history, therefore, the peasant has been prevented from being a scholar of the Classical language due to his life-pattern. Today, however, the Arab peasant must confront the nationalistic, materialistic progression of the modern world; he is believed to be frustrated and discontented because he cannot partake fully in the political, social, and economic development of his country. Diglossia has deepened his, the illiterate's, plight, and has made illiteracy much more difficult to combat. (Fellman 1973:28, 29) Before considering what actions might be taken to dissolve the diglossic split which alienates the Arab peasant (part IV), a descriptive analysis of Classical Arabic and of one of the many vernaculars, Syrian Arabic, follows, because it is deemed necessary to an understanding of a proposed and evolving "Middle Arabic," one hoped to satisfactorily merge and compromise between Classical Arabic and the colloquial dialects.

III. Language Description

It is believed that Classical Arabic (hereafter abbreviated CA) has remained unchanged for the past thirteen hundred years due to the codification of its grammar, by grammarians, and its pronunciation, by reciters of the Qur'ān. As previously described, the prose or poetry of CA may be heard as an oral reading from a text, or as a recital from memory, as is often done with the Qur'ān, but it is never used to carry on a dialogue in an ordinary conversation. (Selim 1967:133) For this purpose, one of the Arabic vernaculars is used. Syrian Arabic, comprising the educated colloquial speech of Damascus (and hereafter abbreviated SA), will be described and compared with CA in this paper because it was the native language of this writer. SA is sometimes referred to as Eastern Mediterranean Arabic and serves as the prestige regional dialect not only for the Syrian area, but also for "Greater Syria," including Palestine (especially Jerusalem), Lebanon (especially Beirut), and Jordan. (Bateson 1967:106)

The following sketch of the linguistic structures of CA and SA presents a synchronic comparison of the phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon of the two languages. (This outline is, in large part, based on that presented by Selim in his study comparing CA and Egyptian Arabic-1967.)

I. PHONOLOGY

A. The phoneme inventory

1. The consonants

CA

Manner of Articulation \ Point of Articulation		Bilablal	Labiodental	Interdental	Dental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	pharyngeal	Laryngeal
Stops	Voiceless				t	ʈ		k	q		ʔ
	Voiced	b			d	ɖ					
Affricates	Voiceless						ʧ				
	Voiced										
Fricatives	Voiceless		f	θ	s	ʂ	ʃ	x		ħ	h
	Voiced			ð ɣ	z			ɣ		ʕ	
Trills	Voiced					r					
Laterals	Voiced				l	ɭ					
Nasals	Voiced	m				n					
Semivowels	Voiced	w					y				

SA

Stops	Voiceless				t	ʈ		k	q		ʔ
	Voiced	b			d	ɖ		ɡ			
Affricates	Voiceless										
	Voiced										
Fricatives	Voiceless		f		s	ʂ	ʃ	x		ħ	h
	Voiced				z	ʐ	ʒ	ɣ		ʕ	
Trills	Voiced					r					
Laterals	Voiced				l						
Nasals	Voiced	m				n					
Semivowels	Voiced	w					y				

The CA inventory is that of Selim (1967:134) and essentially conforms with that of Al-Ani (1970:29) and Bateson (1967:4). While most linguists agree on the phoneme inventory of CA, there is some divergence in the consonantal and vocalic repertoire of SA. Cantineau (1956:123-124) presents 24 consonants and six vowels, while Cowell (1964:1-12) includes three more consonants and five more vowels. The latter analysis is preferred here.

2. The vowels

CA

	Short			Long		
	Front	Central	Back	Front	Central	Back
High	i		u	ii		uu
Mid						
Low		a			aa	

SA

High	i		u	ii		uu
Mid	e	ə	o	ee		oo
Low		a			aa	

The phonemic charts represent the following data:

(a) CA has 35 phonemes comprising 29 consonants (24 nonvelar, five velar) and six vowels (three short, three long).

(b) SA has 38 phonemes comprising 27 consonants (23 nonvelar, four velar) and eleven vowels (six short, five long).

(c) While the total number of phonemes is almost the same in CA and SA, SA tends to lesser consonants and more vowels.

(d) In manner of articulation, SA tends primarily towards stops and away from affricates and fricatives:

CA	/ǰ/	/θ/	/ɣ/	/ẓ/
SA	/g/	/ṭ/	/ḍ/	/d/

(e) In point of articulation, SA tends to back CA consonants. However, the backing is primarily towards dentals or alveolars and away from interdentals:

CA	/ǰ/	/θ/	/ɣ/	/ẓ/
SA	/q/	/s/	/z/	/ẓ/

B. Length

In CA, both vowel and consonant length determine meaningful contrasts. This pertains to SA, also, in which every sound has a long and short form except /ə/, which is always short. (Bateson 1967:6 and Cowell 1964:15)

C. Accentuation

Accentuation is not distinctive in CA nor usually in SA; for the general rule is this: "the last long syllable in a word is accented; if there is no long syllable, then the first syllable is accented." (Cowell 1964:18 and Bateson 1967:8) There are, however, about four exceptions to the general rule of accentuation in SA (Cowell 1964:20-21).

D. Some morphophonemic changes

1. Pause vs. context form

A set of conventions exists for reading CA in the standard style: final short vowels are dropped; case endings at the end of phrases

or isolated on words in "pause form" are dropped or shortened. "CA distinguishes between: (a) pause, incomplete or short form, which occurs finally in an utterance and ends in -C, -CC, or -VV, and if -V occurs finally, it is dropped; and (b) context, complete or long form, which is nonfinal in an utterance and does not drop -V." (Selim 1967:137) This contrast of pause vs. context forms has been dropped in SA, while accentuation has become more important. (Bateson 1967:8, 98)

2. The vowels (Selim 1967:138-140 and Cowell 1964:26-33)

(a) Shortening final long vowels. SA shortens CA final long vowels.

CA	SA	
ʔuktubii	ktibi	'Write!'
katabuu	katabu	'They wrote.'
ramaa	rama	'He threw.'

Final long vowels in CA are shortened only before the glottal stop of obligatory elision.

ʔuktubii +ʔalkitaab	uktubi lkitaab	'Write the book!'
katabuu + ʔalkitaab	katabu lkitaab	'They wrote the book.'
ramaa + ʔalkitaab	rama lkitaab	'He threw the book.'

(b) Lengthening final short vowels. SA lengthens final short vowels before suffixes. CA lengthens final short vowels only when these are thyme vowels, as in poetry.

CA	SA	
ʔuktubii + haa	ktibi + ha	'Write it!'
ʔuktubiihaa	ktibiiha	

CA	SA	
katabuu + haa katabuuhaa	katabu + ha katabuuha	'They wrote it.'
ramaa + haa ramaahaa	rama + ha ramaaha	'He threw it.'

(c) Elision of vowels. With only some exceptions, the /ɛ/ or /o/ before a final consonant in all SA words is dropped when any suffix beginning with a vowel (except /-a/ 'her', /-on/ 'them') is added. CA lacks this feature.

CA	SA	
raat	šaafet (+-ek) you f.	'she saw'
raatek	šaaftek	'she saw you' (f.)
šaaxud	baaxod (+-ak) you m.	'I'll take'
saaxuuduka	baaxdak	'I'll take you' (m.
mudarris	mʕallem (+-iin) pl.	'teacher' (m.)
mudarrisuun	mʕallmiin	'teachers' (m.)

(d) Epenthetic vowels. Neither CA nor SA permits clusters of three consonants. Thus, an epenthetic, or helping vowel is automatically inserted when such a sequence occurs, as in the transition from the end of one word to the beginning of another. (Epenthetic vowels are raised in the transcription below.)

CA has:

/u/ after the pronouns ʔantum, hum, -tum, -hum, -kum

hum + ʔalmudarrisuun→hum^{u} lmadarrisuun

'They are the teachers.'

/a/ after min when followed by the definite article ʔal

min + ʔalmudarris→min^{a} lmudarris

'from the teacher'

/i/, the most common of the three epenthetic vowels, occurs elsewhere.

katabat + ʔaddars→katabat^{i} ddars

'she wrote the lesson.'

SA has:

/ə/ as its single epenthetic vowel, used in a number of different environments to break up consonant clusters. For example, in a cluster of 3 or 4 consonants, it is inserted before the last two:

bənt 'girl' + ʒġiire→bənt$_{\smile}^{ə}$ ʒġiire

'a little girl'

And, a two-consonant sequence, at the end of a phrase, is often eliminated by inserting /ə/ between them:

šuu 'what' + hal- 'this' + ʔakl 'food'→

šuu hal- ʔakəl 'What is this food?'

A basic conclusion which may be drawn from this section is that the phonology of the two varieties of Arabic is "moderately different," as Charles A. Ferguson points out in his Diglossia (1959:335) paper, mentioned above. Commenting on the grammatical structure of the two varieties of any diglossia, Ferguson also says that the "Low variety [here SA] is simpler than that of its corresponding High [here CA]." (p. 334) It is believed that the following analyses will prove this statement to be true also.

II. MORPHOLOGY

A. Grammatical categories

From the comparative chart below, it is obvious that SA has simpler grammatical categories than CA. Verbs and nouns only are treated here, and the restrictions of their categories are not indicated because such are beyond the scope of this study. (Cowell 1964:35, 236, 494 and Selim 1967:140)

	CA	SA
Verbs are inflected for:		
Tense	Perfect Imperfect	Perfect Imperfect
Mood	Indicative Subjunctive Jussive Energetic Imperative	Indicative Subjunctive LACKING LACKING Imperative
Voice	Active Passive	Active Passive
Person	Third (3) Second (2) First (1)	Third Second First
Number	Singular (S) Dual (D) Plural (P)	Singular LACKING Plural
Gender	Masculine (M) Feminine (F)	Masculine Feminine
Nouns are inflected for:		
Number	Singular Dual Plural	Singular Dual Plural
Case	Nominative (N) Accusative (A) Genetive (G)	LACKING LACKING LACKING
Gender	Masculine Feminine	Masculine Feminine

	CA	SA
State	Definite (def) Indefinite (ind)	Definite Indefinite

B. The verb (Selim 1967:141 and Cowell 1964:55, 173-176)

The following table, which gives the conjugation of the verb 'to write', illustrates that SA simplifies CA verb forms in that SA "(1) patterns the person, number, and gender categories of its two tenses after the CA Energetic 2 mood, the only mood in CA that has no Dual or Feminine Plural, (2) patterns its perfect after the pause form of CA perfect, and (3) patterns its imperfect indicative and subjunctive after the Jussive mood (or the Pause mood)." (Selim 1967:141) SA expresses the indicative mood by the prefix /b-/ preceding the person prefixes, and the subjunctive mood by the lack of the /b-/ prefix. (The abbreviations for the categories cited above are used hereafter.)

Tense	Perfect		Imperfect						
Mood	Indicative		Indicative	Subjunctive	Jussive	Energetic 1	Energetic 2	Indicative	Subjunctive
	CA	SA	CA					SA	
3 SM	kataba	kátab	yaktubu	yaktuba	yaktub	yaktubanna	yaktuban	byə́ktob	yə́ktob
SF	...at	...et	t.....	t.....	t.....	t.....	t.....	bt.....	t.....
DM	...aa		y.....aani	y.....aa	y.....aa	y.....aanni			
DF	...ataa		t.....	t.....	t.....	t.....			
PM	...uu	...u	y.....uuna	y.....uu	y.....uu	y.....unna	y.....un	by....u	y.....
PF	...na		y.....na	y.....na	y.....na	y.....naanni			
2 SM	...ta	...t	t.....u	t.....a	t.....	t.....anna	t.....an	bt.....	t.....
SF	...ti	...ti	t.....iina	t.....ii	t.....ii	t.....inna	t.....in	bt....i	t....i
D	...tumaa		t.....aani	t.....aa	t.....aa	t.....aanni			
PM	...tum	...tu	t.....uuna	t.....uu	t.....uu	t.....unna	t.....un	bt....u	t....u
PF	...tunna		t.....na	t.....na	t.....na	t.....naanni			
1 S	...tu	...t	?.....u	?.....a	?.....	?.....anna	?.....an	b.....	?.....
P	...naa	...na	n.....	n.....	n.....	n.....	n.....	mn.....	n.....

C. The noun (Selim 1967:142 and Cowell 1964:209-213, 366)

As is evident from the accompanying table, SA simplifies CA nouns by patterning all of them after those of CA pause form.

	CA		SA
	Full form	Pause form	
ind N	mudarrisaatun	mudarrisaat	
G	...in	...	mɛallemaat
A	...	...	'teachers (F)'
N	...u	...	
def G	...i	...	
A	...	...	
N	mudarrisu	mudarris	
def G	...i	...	mɛallem
A	...a	...	'teacher (M)'
N	...un	...	
G	...in	...	
A	...an	...aa	
ind N	ġaalin	ġaal	
G	...	...	ġaali
A	...iyan	...iyaa	'expensive'
def N	...ii	...ii	
G	...	...	
A	...iya	...	

	CA		SA
	Full form	Pause form	
ind N	kitaabaani	kitaabaan	kitaabeen
ind G	...ayni	...ayn	
def A	...	...	'two books'
ind N	mudarrisuuna	mudarrisuun	mʕallmiin
ind G	...iina	...iin	
def A	...	...	'teachers (M)'

D. Morphological principles

Before leaving morphology to discuss syntax, it is imperative that one looks at the derivational processes by which Arabic operates and which are considered "more highly developed in Arabic than in other Semitic languages." (Bateson 1967:1)

Arabic is characterized and operates by the "root and pattern system." In both CA and SA, roots usually consist of three consonants (or are triliteral; many quadriliteral roots, however, exist), such as klm. (Cowell 1964:35-51) Bateson (1967:1) continues describing the system in the following manner:

> These consonant sequences, unpronounceable in themselves, have one or sometimes several general meanings: the root klm means something to do with speech. Roots cannot be used, however, unless they are provided with vowels, and may be specifically defined only when in association with a particular vowel pattern, e.g. /kalimah/ 'word, utterance, maxim', utilizing the pattern C a C i C ah, where C C C represent the three
> 1 2 3 1 2 3

consonants of the root in relation to the surrounding vowels. Some patterns require the lengthening (gemination) of one of the root consonants: /kallam/ 'he addressed (someone)' has the pattern C_1 a C_2 C_2 a C_3. Some patterns involve the affixation of additional consonants: /kalmaaniiy/ 'eloquent, fluent speaker', from the pattern C_1 a C_2 C_3 aaniiy, or /muta kallim/ 'spokesman, theologian', from the pattern muta C_1 a C_2 C_2 i C_3. These patterns, while not perfectly systematic, do in many cases have clearly definable functions, and the attempt to define these functions makes up a great part of the grammatical study of Arabic, whereas the listing of roots is essentially the business of the dictionary.

In dealing with the root and pattern system, Bateson (1967:2-3) further offers three significant generalizations:

> (a) most patterns, even in what are called pausal forms, provide some information about the place of a particular form in the system of parts of speech, e.g., as a verb form or a noun form; (b) many patterns are the result of a series of derivational steps, some of which are semantically systematic, while others seem arbitrary: the meanings of derived forms of the verb are often startling, though the participles derived from those verb forms stand in a predictable relationship to them; (c) some forms are almost totally predictable, and, if the form does not already exist, will be given a predictable meaning when coined, up to the point where some historical accident intervenes.

To illustrate the foregoing, some examples in SA follow: (Cowell 1964:36-38)

(a)	žəbne 'cheese'	rəkbe 'knee'
	ʿəlbe 'box'	nəsbe 'relationship'
	ʿətbe 'marriage proposal'	ʔəbre 'needle'

The pattern which is evident in these words comprises the sequence C_1 + ə + C_2 C_3 + e. It is one of the patterns which identifies feminine nouns, but it refers to no part of the words' meanings.

(b) ṭabbaax 'cook' ḥallaaʔ 'barber'
xayyaaṭ 'tailor' fannaan 'artist'
ɣarraaḥ 'surgeon' xaddaam 'servant'

This pattern, C_1 + a + C_2 C_2 + aa + C_3, is typical of masculine nouns, but also carries an element of meaning: it indicates the occupation or profession of the person referred to.

(c) Turning to roots, the following illustrates that words with the same root are usually related in meaning:

ṭabbaax 'cook'.....maṭbax 'kitchen' (Root ṭ-b-x)
xaddaam 'servant'....xədme 'service' (Root x-d-m)
xəṭbe 'marriage proposal'..xaṭiib 'fiancé' (Root x-ṭ-b)

(There are numerous exceptions, however, to both the pattern and root implications.)

III. SYNTAX

The major differences between CA and SA syntactically are clearly linked to morphological changes. SA is becoming increasingly synthetic, with word order and particles bearing a heavier burden. Indeed, the most outstanding feature of SA, as well as of all of the Arabic vernaculars, is that it drops all final short vowels, thereby losing completely CA'a system of nominal inflection for cases and verbal inflection for moods. (Bateson 1967: 97-101)

A. Agreement

SA may have a more complex system of parts of speech than CA because it has developed an independent category of adverbs and it has multiplied the use of phrase types, particularly verbal phrases. One area to be illustrated here, agreement, designates, however, that SA tends to simplify the agreement between nouns and adjectives. CA dual and feminine plural adjectives are expressed the same way as the masculine plural in SA. (Cowell 1964:133, 138, 202, 515; Bateson 1967:100; Selim 1967:143)

	CA		SA		
SM	mudarrisun	muhimmun	mɛallem	mhəmm	'an important
F	...atun	...atun	...e	...e	teacher'
PM	...uuna	...uuna	...iin	...iin	'important
F	...aatun	...aatun	...aat	...	teachers'
DM	maktabaani	...aani	maktabeen	...	'two important offices'
F	...ataani	...ataani	...teen	...	'two important libraries'

B. Contrastive text

A series of utterances are cited below to illustrate the differences of syntactic form employed by CA and SA. In each pair, the CA utterance is given first (Selim 1967:143-144), followed by its SA counterpart (Dr. Deeb Shalhoub, informant). CA utterances terminate with words given in their pause form, and their context form appears between parenthesis. Two different intonation

patterns are indicated by the marks /./ and /?/ finally in an utterance.

These utterances are accompanied by a tape recorded by Dr. Deeb Shalhoub, an informant educated both in Damascus, Syria, and in the U.S. This tape is provided because SA, like all the Arabic vernaculars, is almost exclusively conversational Arabic, and thus familiarity with its live sound is indispensable to its application. Both CA and SA utterances are recorded for their contrastive value.

(1) ʔiǰaa lam taskut saʔaǰhabu ʔila_lǰaamiᵉah (ǰaamiᵉati).
ʔiza ma sakatit ana raayeh ʕal ǰaamʕah.
'If you (MS) don't be quiet, I'm going to the university.'

(2) tafaḍḍal min hunaa w_aǰlis ᵉalaa ǰaalika_lmaqᵉad (maqᵉadi).
tfaḍḍal min hoon, wᵊʔood ʕalla hadik_lkersi.
'Please come (MS) this way, and sit on that chair.'

(3) likay yaraa ǰawaaza ssafari w_attaʔšiirah (taʔšiirata) mᵊn šaan yišuuf joowaz_issafar w_ittaʔšiira.
'So that he may see the passport and the visa.'

(4) hunaaka mabaanin kaθiiratun ǰadiidah (ǰadiidatun).
fii binayaat jdiidi ktiir.
'There are many new buildings.'

(5) ʔalḥuǰratu muriiḥatun wa manẓaru_nniili ǰamiil (ǰamiilun).
ʔiloḍa mᵊriiḥa wᵊmunẓar_enniil ḥelu.
'The room is comfortable and the view of the Nile is beautiful.'

(6) kam^{i}__ssaa^{e}atu__l?aan (?aana)?

adeeš__issaaʕa halla??

'What time is it now?'

(7) ?ayna ?anta ʒaahib (ʒaahibun)?

ween rayeh?

'Where are you (MS) going?'

(8) lastu ʒaahiban ?ila__lmadrasati__lyawma yaa waalidii.

manii raayeh ʕal madrasi lyom, baaba.

'I'm not going to school today, Daddy.'

(9) ?ataʒkuriina ^{e}indamaa kunti taquuuliina haaʒa__lka.

laam (kalaama)?

ptitzakarii lama kinti tʕoolii hal kalaam?

'Do you (FS) remember when you used to say this?'

(10) laa taxaf ?abadan.

laa t^{ə}xaaf ?abadaan.

'Don't be afraid (MS) at all.'

(11) ?a^{e}tinii kuuba maa? (maa?in).

ʕatiinii kaasset may.

'Give (MS or FS) me a glass of water.'

(12) ma_smu_rraǰuli__llaʒii ǰaa? a ?ams (?amsi)?

šu ism__zalame lli iǰa mbaareh?

'What is the name of the man who came yesterday?'

IV. LEXICON

The Arabic lexicon includes an immense number of words from various areas and historical epochs. All of the nuances acquired for these words have been preserved with them, often making meanings in context difficult to determine and, obviously, resulting in an extremely diffuse semantic spectrum.

However, "the old-fashioned jibe that 'every word in Arabic means itself, its opposite and a kind of camel' is wholly unmerited" when one considers the fact that Arabic conceptual categories, as those of any cultural group, are unique and very different from those familiar to Europeans, for example. (Beeston 1970:111) Actually, the Arab people use only a small portion of this immense vocabulary they have accumulated, "except for conscious and conspicuous archaism"; also, the practice common in traditional dictionaries of listing half a dozen very different meanings for various words is now ordinarily restricted to one or two. (Bateson 1967:86-87)

CA lends itself to three different sources of new vocabulary acquisition. (Bateson 1967:86-91) The first of these is the reinterpretation and revival of old terms, by analogy, to fit modern contexts: for example, /qiṭaar/ and /sayyaraah/ are two rarely used terms for 'caravan', which are presently employed to signify 'train' and 'automobile', respectively. Second, it has been established that the structure of the Arabic lexicon is based on various patterns for deriving nouns and verbs from existing roots. With patterns which are still open to new coinages (e.g., if the relationship between meaning and pattern has not shifted over the years), words may be coined at will, exhibiting some chance of inherent meaning. While relatively few patterns are thoroughly open for free coinage, however, most patterns accommodate the innovation of technical terms:

Verbal nouns: /taʔmiin/ 'insurance', /taʕyiin/ 'ionization', /ʔidaaʕah/ 'broadcasting'

Participles: /muʔtamar/ 'conference', /mantuujaat/ 'products'

Nouns of place: /maṣnaʿ/ 'factory', /mustaṣfaa/ 'hospital', /maṭaar/ 'airport'

Finally, the third source of new vocabulary is direct borrowing from Indo-European and Semitic languages. Most of the earlier loans from Latin suit the Arabic phonological pattern well (/ṣiraat/ 'path' from strata); however, only a few Greek loans that came into Arabic in the Middle Ages for adaptation of the Greek sciences could be fully assimilated (/falsaf/ 'philosophize'), with the majority being unmistakably foreign (/juuġraafiiyah/ 'geography'). Terms such as these are difficult to incorporate into the Arabic language because they do not easily fit most of the derivational processes. Not only do the people of the land feel that such borrowings impinge on Arabic style, but, recently, their growing sense of nationalism has made them less tolerant of these borrowings from European languages, which they regard only as a last resort. As such, modern borrowings today come primarily from French (/bilaaj/ 'beach', Fr. plage; /lḥayaatu lbuuhiimiiyay/ 'la vie de bohème'), with English (/kuktiil/, /faytaamiin/) and Italian words being the next most numberous, respectively.

SA, like the other dialects, has always tolerated and assimilated more loanwords than CA. One clear bit of evidence to substantiate this claim is that SA embodies Turkish loanwords, which are all but nonexistent in CA. However, Ferguson's basic premise concerning the lexicon in a diglossia situation, established above, holds true for CA and SA also: that CA and SA contain paired items which are synonymous, but which are distinctively marked as either the High or Low variety. In addition

to the pair /raʔaa/ and /šaaf/ 'see', noted above, the CA /jaaʔa bi-/ 'come with, bring' is /jaab/ in SA, and CA /maa/ 'what' is /šuu/ in SA. (Bateson 1967:100-101) In all these examples, SA tends to simplify the CA forms.

SA, again like the other dialects, contains a great deal of vocabulary borrowed from CA. Many words in CA pertaining to technical and academic subjects enter the general vocabulary by means of educated speakers discussing such subjects and sometimes by means of the radio or cinema. Also, there is much religious vocabulary borrowed from CA: in SA, where CA /q/ ordinarily becomes /ʔ/, the /q/ is yet preserved in such words as the /qurʔaan/. Often, one word in CA will have two cognates in SA, one representing the structure of the dialect with the other remaining a loanword. The interdentals have been completely reduced to dentals (/t/, /d/, /ḍ/) in SA and they are pronounced as sibilants in Classical loanwords: CA /ḥadiit/ 'event, saying' is manifested both as /ḥadiit/ 'event' and /ḥadiis/ 'saying attributed to Muhammad' in SA. Finally, proverbs, which include religious maxims, are usually quoted in CA, even when cited in ordinary conversation by illiterates (this constitutes part of the qualification ascribed to Ferguson's "function" of diglossia, above). (Bateson 1967:106-107, 110-111)

IV. Standardization

Due to the many complications produced by diglossia, much thought is being given to the development of a "Middle Arabic", one which would be more attainable to the general populace, through a simpler CA structure, but yet would be universal in the Arab world and preserve the Classical tradition. Such a development is taking place in the Arab world due to certain trends which have appeared: "(a) more widespread literacy (whether for economic, ideological, or other reasons), (b) broader communication among different regional and social segments of the community (e.g. for economic, administrative, military, or ideological reasons), and (c) the desire for a full-fledged standard "national" language as an attribute of autonomy or of sovereignty." (Ferguson 1959:338)

Among those who have called for unification of the language (leaders in the community and/or the intelligentsia), some support the adoption of CA, others one colloquial form, and the majority favors a modified or mixed variety of these two (despite Ferguson's assertion that this is not very common, 1959:38; Ferguson, in fact, is biased toward greater use of the colloquial variety). Taking the advocates of CA first, these "classicists" or "purists" believe in the supremacy of a language which accords with the literary language of the Middle Ages. "They are convinced that such a language, patterned after the classical, is clear, concise, expressive, and possesses all the ingredients necessary for becoming the standard language. Moreover, it has the added advantage of preserving the Qur'ān and the great literary tradition." (Chejne 1969:165) Based on these grounds,

any dialect is thought to be unworthy and incapable of expressing thought. Classicists also maintain "that dialects lack any literary tradition to speak of, that they suffer from the major defect of not portraying the past in its full glory, and are inadequate for the political, social, and cultural needs of present-day Arab society." (Chejne 1969:164-165 and Fellman 1973:29)

Advocates of the colloquial, on the other hand, view the classical language as archaic and incompatible with modern times and needs. As a result, it does not truly express either the emotional or the intellectual persuasions of most of the prople. Frayḥah, one of these advocates, writes:

> We think, speak, sing, murmur our prayer, talk tenderly to our children, whisper in the ears of our beloved ones, seek understanding with whoever we want to and insult those who we see fit to in a flowery and smooth spoken language which does not delay thinking, nor requires much effort. But when we assume a formal position in the capacity of a teacher, preacher, lawyer, broadcaster or lecturer, we have to attire ourselves with another linguistic personality, and we have to talk in a language with difficult vowel-endings, and with stiff rules in its construction and expressions. (Chejne 1969:162-163)

The classical is, therefore, completely out of touch with the people and is used only by writers or a small minority. Advocates of the colloquial further insist that "the colloquial is not a product of linguistic degeneration, but of linguistic evolution born of the needs of the people....It possesses the human element....[and] it surpasses the terse, archaic, and lifeless classical...." (Chejne 1969:167) Adoption of a colloquial language would also ease the educational problem since people have already acquired a basic knowledge of it in early childhood. Consequently, based on considerations of usage and

linguistic evolution, colloquial proponents believe "one or more dialects will triumph, creating a historical parallel with the victory of colloquial languages over Greek and Latin." (Chejne 1969:166-167 and Cadora 1965:133)

The most practical and suitable proposal concerning the issue of standardization, though, is the adoption of a unified language, one which satisfactorily merges and compromises between CA and the colloquial dialects, the language of the intelligentsia. (Fellman 1973:31 and Chejne 1969:168) That the "language of the educated" should prevail throughout the Arab world is not surprising when one considers that intellectuals from different Arab countries find it simpler and more natural to use their own forms of colloquial Arabic for the fullest communication. (This Intercommon Spoken Arabic, hereafter ISA, is not to be confused with MSA, Modern Standard Arabic, defined as "that variety of Arabic that is found in contemporary books, newspapers, and magazines, and that is used orally in formal speeches, public lectures, learned debates, religious ceremonials and in news broadcasts over radio and television." (McLoughlin 1972:58) In other words, MSA is a syntactically simplified and lexically and phonetically modified form of CA, used only in formal contexts.)

Educated interdialectal conversation, or ISA, is characterized by stylistic modifications known as "leveling" and "classicizing". (Blanc 1964:81-87) Leveling involves suppressing certain features of one's native dialect and replacing them with their equivalents in a more prestigious dialect; this occurs primarily in relation to the prestige dialect of the region rather than to the dialect of the person with whom one

is conversing. For example, villagers of Syria can choose to imitate the Damascus dialect by eliminating the /q/ in words like /alb/~/qalb/ 'heart'. "In general, leveling often takes place not so much in imitation of a specific dialect as in an attempt to suppress localisms in favor of features which are simply more common, more well known; these may be region-wide dialect features (Allepine /ʔiššu/ 'what' replaced by 'general Syrian' /šu/), features shared by many dialects and the classical (/maᶜ/ 'with', for Baghdadi /wiya/) or widely understood classicisms (Baghdadi /laax/ 'other', replaced by classical /ʔaaxar/)." (Blanc 1964:82) The last two examples represent the overlap of leveling and classicizing devices, which is not an infrequent phenomenon.

Some classicizing devices have become a normal part of everyday conversational style and are used, for one example, when addressing an equal or superior with whom one is not completely familiar: thus /q/ is restored in certain words in Damascus, such as /qahwe/ 'coffee' or, in Cairo, /qism/ 'police station'.

In addition to the various classicisms prevalent in everyday usage, there are those which clearly distinguish an utterance as elevated or "semi-literary". These classicising devices can, by definition, be used only by educated speakers, in discussing academic subjects or in any very formal situation. The speaker has many variations at his disposal: he may introduce subordinate clauses with /ʔan/ without altering basic syntax, he may employ phonemic change by pronouncing /blaad/ 'country' as /bilaad/, and he may express whole phrases in pure or modified CA. Classicizing devices also include vocabulary borrowed

from CA; CA vocabulary is "freely borrowed...in all educated (and pretentious) speech." (Bateson 1967:112)

Leveling and classicizing devices combine to such an extent that, according to Blanc's study of the present usage of Arabic, it is difficult "to find any sustained segment of discourse even in a single sentence" outside of purely "homespun conversation." (Blanc 1964:85) Describing the style of any given segment of discourse requires more than the usual techniques of descriptive linguistics, for it involves the recognition of at least five styles: plain colloquial, which incorporates informal or mildly formal features; koineized colloquial, which contains leveling devices; semi-literary or elevated colloquial, which is any plain or koineized colloquial that is classicized beyond the "mildly formal" range; modified classical, which is CA with dialectal admixtures; and standard classical, which is essentially without dialectal admixtures. (Blanc 1964:85) However, Blanc's text includes some views and prospects proposed by educated Arabs on their language, tending to support the standardization of ISA:

(1) the present diversity in the Arabic dialects is due to a lack of intercommunication among the Arabs, which lack is itself due to the partitioning of the Arab world into separate entities by foreign powers;

(2) the removal of externally imposed barriers to intercommunication is now in progress, and with it the gradual removal of most dialectal differences;

(3) this linguistic unification will be enhanced by increased education, especially of women [and the peasant in general], and the result will be a language "very close" to CA and "very far" from any of the colloquials;

(4) the words used all over the Arab world will be the same, but each region will retain its own peculiarities of pronunciation, "just like the United States";

(5) the "language of the educated,"....is the common Arabic of the future <u>in statu nascendi</u>; and

(6) it is not possible to say by what date this unification will have taken place, but all things considered, fifty years hence seems a reasonable estimate, with some developments possibly requiring a shorter period. (Blanc 1964:87)

ISA consists, at present, "of relatively uncodified, somewhat unstable, intermediate forms." (Ferguson 1959:32) It can be generally stated, however, that its form is derived basically from a combination of the pausalized system of MSA and one or more of the dialects. "MSA pausal forms have been generalized throughout the ISA system, eliminating all inflectional endings of the verb and noun except in borrowed words, terms, or expressions from MSA and in some items which retain semantically significant markers (feminine endings in verb, noun, and adjective; dual ending in the noun, and the generalized oblique masculine plural)." (Cadora 1965:135) ISA vocabulary is essentially the same as that of MSA, but the morphology and syntax of ISA are based on the dialectal form; for the structural system of ISA seems to be nearly identical with that of a koine II, from which dialectal Arabic is derived. Phonologically, ISA differs in some respects from MSA, but there is no unified system throughout the Arab world as of yet; the existing texts in ISA are restricted to an Eastern form of Arabic. (Cadora 1965:133-136)

This paper concludes with the strong belief that ISA will evolve as a harmonious link between CA and all the diverse dialects, despite Ferguson's prediction that several standard languages, each based on a Low variety (Maghrebi, Egyptian, Iraqi, Syrian, and/or Sudanese) with a heavy admixture of High vocabulary, will be the outcome of diglossia in the Arab world. ISA appears to be a more fruitful compromise in that it would serve

as a unifying language among all the Arabs and, as is evident, it is already in the process of starting. Total unification, at least in the domain of language, seems likely to effect badly needed sociolinguistic changes and to improve the future lot of the majority of the Arab peoples.

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